

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for making pallets from plant fibers comprising:
 - preparing unwoven fabric of randomly tangled plant fibers;
 - impregnating the unwoven fabric with resin to provide a sheet of base material;
 - sandwiching and pressurizing the sheet of base material between upper and lower metal molds having a plurality of hot-air vents, providing the plurality of hot-air vents extending through the upper and lower molds such that the plurality of hot-air vents are spaced at regular intervals throughout substantially an entire confronting surface of the upper and lower molds, the plurality of hot-air vents having varying lengths; and
 - heating the sheet of base material sandwiched by hot air blowing from one to the other metal mold via the hot-air vents to shape the sheet of base material into a pallet with recesses formed on its surface by the hot-air vents.
2. (Previously Presented) The method for making pallets according to claim 1, wherein the randomly tangled plant fibers are prepared by separating the plant fibers from crushed shells of hard-shelled nut-like fruits or from plants.

3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for making pallets comprising:

upper and lower metal molds confronting each other to define confronting areas;

a plurality of hot-air vents extending through the upper and lower molds, the plurality of hot-air vents are spaced at regular intervals throughout substantially the entire confronting areas, the plurality of hot-air vents having varying lengths; and

a hot-air generator having a hot-air outlet and a hot-air inlet to which the hot-air vents of the upper and lower metal molds are connected respectively, thereby permitting hot air to circulate and pass ~~through~~ between the upper and lower metal molds via the hot-air vents to provide a pallet with recesses formed on its surface by the hot-air vents.

4. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 3, wherein additional hot-air vents are provided in a circumference of the metal molds.

5. (Previously Presented) The method for making pallets according to claim 2, wherein the hard-shelled nut-like fruits comprises at least one of coconut shells and oily coconut shells.

6. (Previously Presented) The method for making pallets according to claim 2, wherein the tangled plant fibers are prepared by separating the plant fibers from jute.

7. (Previously Presented) The method for making pallets according to claim 1, comprising providing the upper and lower molds with corresponding through-holes in

communication with the plurality of hot air vents, the corresponding through-holes having a diameter of approximately 1.0 cm.

8. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 3, wherein the upper and lower molds comprise through-holes in communication with the plurality of hot air vents, the corresponding through-holes having a diameter of approximately 1.0 cm.

9. (Previously Presented) The method for making pallets according to claim 1, comprising spacing the plurality of hot air vents at an interval of one hot air vent per 5 X 5 cm on the confronting surface.

10. (Previously Presented) The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 3, wherein the plurality of hot air vents are spaced at an interval of one hot air vent per 5 X 5 cm on the confronting areas.

11. (Previously Presented) The method for making pallets according to claim 1, comprising providing circumferential extending hot air vents on a circumference of the upper and lower molds.

12. (Currently Amended) The apparatus for making pallets according to claim 4 ~~claim 3~~, wherein the circumferential extending hot air vents are provided on a circumference of the upper and lower molds.